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ABSTRACT

This document is the 1984-85 annual report analyzing the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) scores of Connecticut's college-bound seniors and describing the students' characteristics, high school records, and college plans. The report is based on responses from public and non-public school seniors who participated in the College Board's Admissions Testing Program at any time during high school. The statistical data presented here indicate how the students' academic performance and future aspirations compare with their peers' nationwide and provides users with information to draw conclusions about future trends. A summary and analysis of the College Board's findings are given, highlighting some of the more interesting findings. This is followed by a presentation of the data in the form of tables with explanatory text. The data is subdivided into four sections: student characteristics, test scores, high school record, and college plans. (CG)

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College-Bound Seniors Report 1984-85

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PREFACE

This is the eleventh annual report prepared by the Office of Research and Evaluation to analyze the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) scores of Connecticut's college-bound seniors. This is the fifth report that, in addition to test scores, comprehensively presents these students' characteristics, their high school records and their college plans.

This report is based upon the most recent responses of 1984-85 public and nonpublic school seniors who participated in the College Board's Admissions Testing Program at any time during high school. Thus, students who participated in the program in May of their junior year and in October of their senior year have only the October results reported, while students who participated only in May of their junior year have these scores included. Connecticut students are those attending school in Connecticut or, if a school code is not reported on the questionnaire, those with a Connecticut mailing address.

The Admissions Testing Program consists of the verbal and mathematical sections of the Scholastic Aptitude Test, Test of Standard Written English (TSWE), 14 optional achievement tests, and the Student Descriptive Questionnaire.

The Scholastic Aptitude Test, probably the most familiar component of the Admissions Testing Program, consists of a two-and-one-half hour, multiple-choice test of verbal and mathematical reasoning. It is intended to supplement high school grades in the college admissions process. The tests, whose scores range from 200-800 points, are constructed so that scores will be comparable from form to form, administration to administration, and year to year.

The Test of Standard Written English is a 30-minute multiple-choice examination of ability to recognize standard written English. It was developed in 1974-75 to help colleges place students in freshman English courses. Scores are placed upon a 20 to 80 point scale, but because the test is to be used as a diagnostic instrument, the highest reported score is 60+.

A student may take up to three one-hour multiple-choice achievement tests per session. These are designed to measure knowledge and its application in English comprehension, literature, American history and social studies, European history and world culture, mathematics (levels 1 and 2), French, German, Hebrew, Latin, Spanish, biology, chemistry, and physics.

The Student Descriptive Questionnaire contains questions on a student's background, school record, extracurricular activities, and college plans. It gives colleges a broader picture of a student than do test scores alone. In 1984-85, 88.3 percent of Connecticut students responded to at least one item on the questionnaire.

The students described in this report are called college-bound seniors. They are students whose intent to attend college is indicated by their taking the SAT. Last year the College Board reported that 29,669 Connecticut seniors in the class of 1984 took the SAT. Information from the Connecticut State Department of Education's Graduate Follow-Up Report indicates that 29,311 or 66.7 percent of the 1984 graduates of the local public, vocational-technical and nonpublic schools were pursuing post-high school study, and 25,980 of these graduates were attending two- or four-year colleges.

The primary purpose of this report is to highlight the information on college-bound seniors presented to the State Department of Education by The College Board. The Department of Education's Office of Research and Evaluation has a file of statewide data from 1971-72 to date and welcomes inquiries.

HIGHLIGHTS

The statistical data on Connecticut's college-bound seniors indicates how their academic performance and future aspirations compare with their peers nationwide. Although the report on the data contains no extrapolations, it does provide users with the means to draw some conclusions about future trends.

The Student Descriptive Questionnaire, for example, queries college-bound seniors on their intended areas of study. Their answers give some indication of the future supply of engineers, biologists, teachers, and other professionals four years from now when, it can be assumed, the majority of these students will graduate from college.

A summary and analysis of the College Board's findings follow.

- 28,866 students, 66.2 percent of all twelfth graders in Connecticut, took a Scholastic Aptitude Test (see Table 1). The College Board reported that Connecticut had the highest participation rate in the nation.

- The percentage of minority students among college-bound seniors has risen from 6.7 percent to 10.1 percent in the past ten years, but the reported number has declined in recent years (see Table 2).

- The Connecticut SAT verbal average of 440 was nine points above the 1984-85 national average and four points above last year's state average. The state average is ten points above the 1980-81 low, two points below the level of ten years ago and 33 points below the level of 15 years ago (see Table 3 and Figure 1).

- On the SAT verbal, Connecticut males averaged 444 and females 436. The difference between the male and female average was five points less than the 13 point difference of last year (see Table 3).

- The Connecticut average SAT mathematical score of 475 was seven points above last year's state average, and, for the first time in five years, equal to the current national average. The state average is four points above the level of ten years ago, but 16 points below the average of 15 years ago (see Table 4 and Figure 2).

- The mean SAT mathematical score of Connecticut males was 499, and that of females was 454. This difference of 45 points was evident in the national scores also (see Table 4).

- The percentages of Connecticut students scoring above 600 on either the verbal or mathemetical SAT are at ten-year highs. Both are above the national percentages, mathematics for the first time (see Table 5).

- The gap between black and Hispanic students and white students has narrowed since 1975-76, but there has been little change in the past four years (see Figures 3 and 4).

- The Connecticut average of 43.4 (on a scale of 20-80) on the Test of Standard Written English (TSWE) was 0.1 points above last year and 0.7 percentage points above the national average (see Table 6).

- Connecticut female students averaged 44.1 on the TSWE, 1.5 points higher than the males. In 1974-75 the female average was 2.4 points higher than the males (see Table 6).

- About one in three Connecticut students who take the SAT take the achievement tests; nationwide, the figure is almost one in five. The verbal SAT of this subgroup of Connecticut students was two points above, and the mathematical SAT four points below, the comparable national average. Compared to last year, this year's averages increased in English Composition, American History, Mathematics Level I, Biology, and Chemistry, but decreased slightly in Mathematics Level 2, as the percentage taking that test increased (see Table 7).

- The student-reported grade point averages (GPA) of college-bound seniors in Connecticut are lower than those reported nationally. The Connecticut average GPAs for males and females have drifted downward from the inflated levels of the mid-70s. In 1984-85, 6.5 percent of males and 4.3 percent of females in Connecticut reported a GPA below C, or 2.0. Nationwide, the percentages below C were lower (see Table 8).

- Connecticut college-bound seniors reported taking more courses in mathematics, English, foreign languages, and the sciences, and fewer courses in social studies than did students nationally (see Table 9).

- Females have taken fewer mathematics courses than males. However, the difference between males and females in the average number of mathematics courses taken continued to narrow (see Table 9).

- Currently in the state, men take 2.5 years of foreign languages and women take 2.9 years. These averages are about one semester more than students nationally, and are above the numbers reported five years ago, but below the levels of ten years ago (see Table 9).

- The percentage of college-bound Connecticut students in honors courses ranged from 11.8 percent for males in foreign languages to 19.3 percent for females in English. A greater percentage of Connecticut college-bound seniors took honors courses in all subjects, except English and mathematics, than did students nationwide (see Table 10).

- Participation of males in high school activities has remained relatively stable in the past ten years. In that time, females have increased participation in athletics, but decreased participation in every other area (see Table 11).

- The number of female students intending to secure a professional degree has increased in the past ten years and is approaching parity with males (see Table 12).

- The intended area of college study has shifted from the arts and humanities, the biological sciences, and the social sciences toward business, commerce and communications, and the physical sciences. Particularly notable was the increased interest of females in business and, within the past year, a switch in their interest from computer science to the social sciences (see Table 13).

- The percent of Connecticut female students intending to study education dropped from 13.3 percent ten years ago to 6.4 percent in 1984-85, and the percentage of males declined from 4.7 percent to 1.6 percent during the same period (see Table 13).

- Both the verbal and mathematical SAT scores of seniors intending to study education have increased 12 points in the past two years, but remain well below the state's verbal and mathematical averages (see Table 14 and Figure 5).

The Connecticut test scores from the Admissions Testing Program (ATP) are more meaningful when compared with prior years' data and national data. This underscores the importance of knowing how the characteristics of the Connecticut students participating in the ATP change from year to year and how they compare to students nationally.

The number of twelfth graders in the local public, state vocational-technical schools and in the nonpublic schools was 43,595 in 1984-85. This was over 2,200 fewer than the prior year, more than 8,200 below the 1977-78 peak, and the lowest number in the past ten years. The percentage of students in the public schools (82.9% in 1984-85) has declined for nine consecutive years and now is 3.6 percentage points below the 1975-76 peak (see Table 1).

Table 1

Characteristics of 12th Grade Students in Connecticut

School Year	Number of 12th Graders	Percent in Public Schools	Number Taking SAT Exams	Percent of 12th Graders Taking SAT
1984-85	43,595	82.9%	28,866	66.2%
1983-84	45,839	83.4%	29,669	64.7%
1982-83	48,327	83.9%	30,659	63.4%
1981-82	49,923	84.8%	31,962	64.0%
1980-81	50,031	84.9%	32,196	64.4%
1979-80	49,405	85.1%	31,734	64.2%
1978-79	51,671	85.5%	32,285	62.5%
1977-78	51,863	85.8%	31,567	60.9%
1976-77	51,848	85.9%	31,834	61.4%
1975-76	51,570	86.5%	32,967	63.9%
1974-75	51,602	86.1%	33,189	64.3%

In 1984-85, 66.2 percent of Connecticut's twelfth graders took the SAT, the highest percentage of seniors taking the SAT in the past ten years. The College Board has reported that Connecticut has the highest participation rate in the country. Nationwide, about one-third of high school graduates take the SAT. The College Board alerts those interpreting these scores that generally the greater the percentage of students taking the test, the lower the average score. Thus, with its high participation rate, the Connecticut scores might be predicted to fall below the national average. Yet in many cases, Connecticut scores are actually higher than the national average and most are higher than would be expected.

Table 2 shows the characteristics of the Connecticut seniors who took the SAT for the years 1974-75 through 1984-85. The 28,866 taking the SAT was the smallest number in the past ten years, about 800 fewer than last year and about 4,300 below the 1974-75 peak. The percentage of female college-bound seniors, which rose gradually from 50.6 percent in 1974-75 to 52.5 percent in 1981-82, has declined for three consecutive years and currently is 51.7 percent. This percentage equals the percentage of females nationally taking the SAT. The percentage of Connecticut students reporting that they attended public schools declined from 79.8 percent in 1974-75 to 74.8 percent in 1984-85. Nationally, 80.6 percent of the current college-bound seniors reported attending public schools.

Table 2

Characteristics of Connecticut Students
Taking the Scholastic Aptitude Test

School Year	Number Taking SAT	Percent Female	Estimated Percent Public	Estimated Percent Minority	Estimated Median Family Income
1984-85	28,866	51.7%	74.8%	10.1%	$35,300
1983-84	29,669	51.9%	74.9%	10.0%	$33,000
1982-83	30,659	52.2%	75.3%	9.4%	$31,300
1981-82	31,962	52.5%	76.8%	9.3%	$28,700
1980-81	32,196	52.1%	77.1%	9.0%	$25,200
1979-80	31,734	52.0%	78.6%	8.8%	$22,900
1978-79	32,285	51.9%	78.3%	8.4%	$21,400
1977-78	31,567	52.2%	78.4%	8.1%	$19,700
1976-77	31,834	52.0%	78.7%	7.5%	$17,900
1975-76	32,967	50.9%	79.7%	7.1%	$17,000
1974-75	33,189	50.6%	79.8%	6.7%	$15,975

In the past ten years, the percentage of minority college-bound students in Connecticut has risen from 6.7 percent to 10.1 percent. The number of minority students rose from 1,599 in 1974-75 to 2,492 in 1981-82 and currently is 2,372. (These are estimates based on the percentage of students identifying their ethnic background. In 1984-85, 81.2 percent of the students answered this question.) Nationwide, 20.0 percent of the 1984-85 college-bound students were minorities, as were 14.4 percent of the twelfth-grade students in Connecticut's public schools in the fall of 1984. The median family income of $35,300 reported by Connecticut college-bound seniors in 1984-85 was $3,100 above the current national average of $32,200.

Thus, the 1984-85 Connecticut college-bound senior class had the same percentage of females, smaller proportions of minorities and public school students, and was wealthier than the national group. How these factors affect the comparison of Connecticut scores with those of the nation is a matter of conjecture.

Table 3 and Figure 1 contain the average SAT verbal scores for male and female students in Connecticut and in the nation for the past ten years. The 1984-85 Connecticut average of 440 was four points above last year's average and nine points above the current national average. The nine point difference in scores between Connecticut and national students was exceeded only once in the past ten years. This was the fourth consecutive year the Connecticut average has increased.

The downward trend of the verbal SAT has been reversed. The national average increase of five points placed it seven points above the 1979-80 and 1980-81 low. In Connecticut, the state average was ten points above the 1980-81 low, and within two points of its level of ten years ago. The national average is currently seven points above its low and three points from its 1974-75 level.

While these results are very positive in terms of the ten-year perspective, they fall short of the levels of the 1960s and early 1970s. Fifteen years ago the Connecticut verbal average was 473 and the national average was 460. Connecticut state data are not available prior to 1969 when the verbal average was 477. Nationally, these scores averaged 475 for the 1955 to 1959 and 1960 to 1964 periods and 468 for the 1965 to 1969 period.

Table 3

Scholastic Aptitude Test
Verbal Scores

Academic Year	Males		Females		Total	
	CT	Nation	CT	Nation	CT	Nation
1984-85	444	437	436	425	440	431
1983-84	443	433	430	420	436	426
1982-83	437	430	429	420	433	425
1981-82	437	431	428	421	432	426
1980-81	436	430	424	418	430	424
1979-80	434	428	428	420	431	424
1978-79	437	431	434	423	435	427
1977-78	441	433	435	425	438	429
1976-77	437	431	436	427	437	429
1975-76	440	433	438	430	439	431
1974-75	443	437	440	431	442	434

Males outscored females on the verbal SAT both in Connecticut and in the nation. In 1984-85, the male average was eight points higher than the female average in Connecticut and twelve higher in the nation. The difference between the male and female averages was reduced from last year's thirteen point high, as the female average increased six points while the male average increased only one. Nevertheless, the eight-point gap is still relatively large. Prior to 1979-80, the typical gap was six points or less.

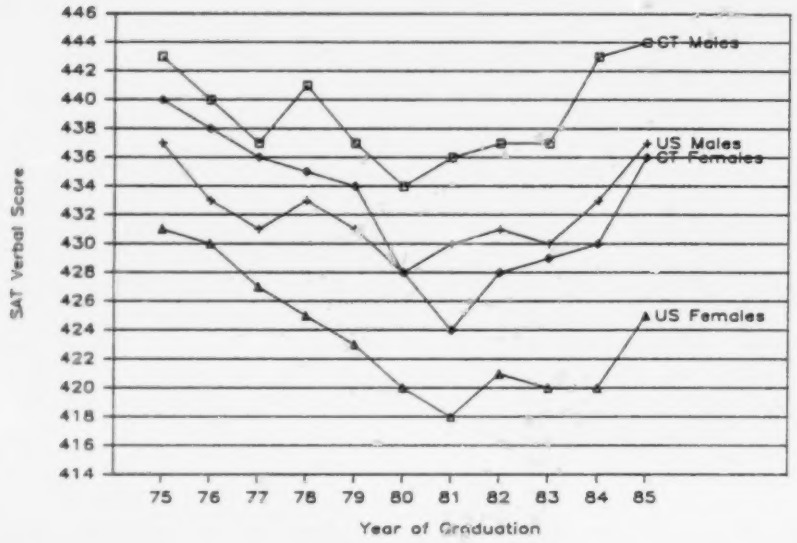

Figure 1

Scholastic Aptitude Test Verbal Scores

Table 4 and Figure 2 present the SAT mathematical scores for male and female students in Connecticut and in the nation from 1974-75 to 1984-85. The Connecticut average of 475 in 1984-85 was seven points above the prior year. This large increase drew the Connecticut average even with the national average for the first time since 1979-80. In the past ten years, the state's average has varied from one point above to three points below the national average.

There was a 45-point gap between the average of Connecticut male and female students in 1984-85. In the past ten years, this differential has ranged from 42 to 50 points. The male average of 499 was 9 points above last year and 12 points above the 1979-80 low. The female average of 454 was up 7 points from last year and now is 15 points above the 1980-81 low.

Table 4

Scholastic Aptitude Test
Mathematical Scores

Academic Year	Males		Females		Total	
	CT	Nation	CT	Nation	CT	Nation
1984-85	499	499	454	452	475	475
1983-84	490	495	447	449	468	471
1982-83	489	493	443	445	465	468
1981-82	490	493	440	443	464	467
1980-81	488	492	439	443	463	466
1979-80	487	491	446	443	466	466
1978-79	488	493	443	443	465	467
1977-78	493	494	447	444	469	468
1976-77	494	497	445	445	468	470
1975-76	498	497	449	446	473	472
1974-75	492	495	450	449	471	472

The long-term decline in the mathematical SAT average also appears to have been reversed. The Connecticut and national averages have increased in the past four years. Connecticut is 12 points and the nation is 9 points above their respective 1980-81 lows.

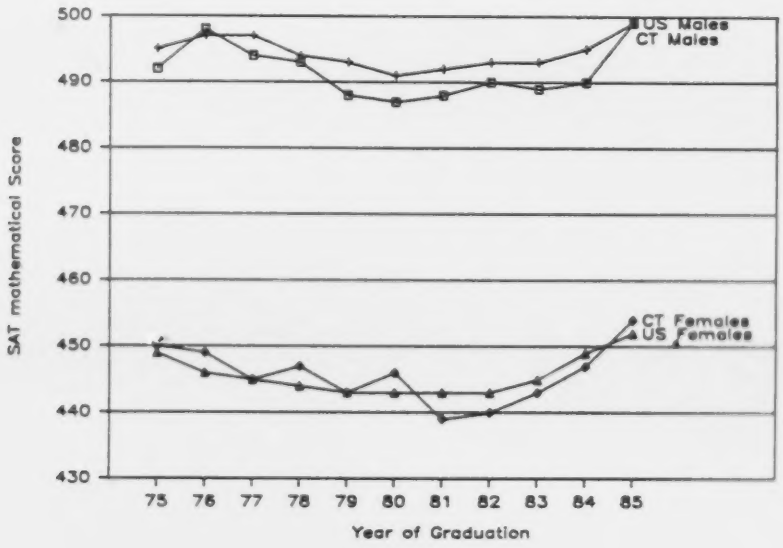

Figure 2

Scholastic Aptitude Test
Mathematical Scores

Although both the state and national averages are at ten-year highs, they are below earlier levels. Fifteen years ago (1969-70) the Connecticut average was 491 and the national average was 488. The national average was 497 over the 1955 to 1959 period, 498 over the 1960 to 1964 period, and 494 over the 1965 to 1969 period.

Table 5 presents the percentage of students in Connecticut and the nation who scored 600 and above on the verbal or mathematical SAT over the past ten years. On the verbal SAT, 2,606 Connecticut students (9.0% of SAT takers) scored 600 and above in 1984-85. This was 1.1 percentage points above the national average and 0.4 percentage points above last year's state level. It equals the ten-year high set in 1975-76, but is exceeded by the 12.4 percent reported in 1971-72 (the first year these data were reported). On the mathematical SAT, 5,050 Connecticut students (17.5% of the SAT takers) scored 600 and above in 1984-85. This was 1.3 percentage points above last year and the highest level since these data were first reported in 1971-72. The Connecticut percentage above 600 also exceeded the national percentage for the first time since these data were reported.

Table 5

Percent of Students Scoring 600 and Above
on the Scholastic Aptitude Test

Academic Year	Verbal		Mathematical	
	CT	Nation	CT	Nation
1984-85	9.0%	7.9%	17.5%	17.1%
1983-84	8.6%	7.3%	16.2%	16.7%
1982-83	7.8%	6.9%	15.2%	15.9%
1981-82	7.8%	7.1%	14.6%	15.3%
1980-81	7.3%	7.0%	13.4%	14.4%
1979-80	7.9%	7.2%	14.8%	15.1%
1978-79	8.5%	7.7%	14.3%	15.0%
1977-78	8.6%	7.9%	15.0%	15.8%
1976-77	8.5%	8.0%	15.0%	16.1%
1975-76	9.0%	8.2%	15.9%	16.3%
1974-75	8.3%	7.9%	14.3%	15.6%

The College Board has begun to report average SAT scores by ethnic group. Figures 3 and 4 present for the years 1975-76 through 1984-85 the Connecticut average verbal and mathematical scores, respectively, for blacks, Puerto Ricans, Orientals and whites. (The College Board reports Hispanics as either Mexican American or Puerto Rican. Since the number of Mexican-Americans in the Connecticut college-bound population has never exceeded 40, only the Puerto Rican averages are reported).

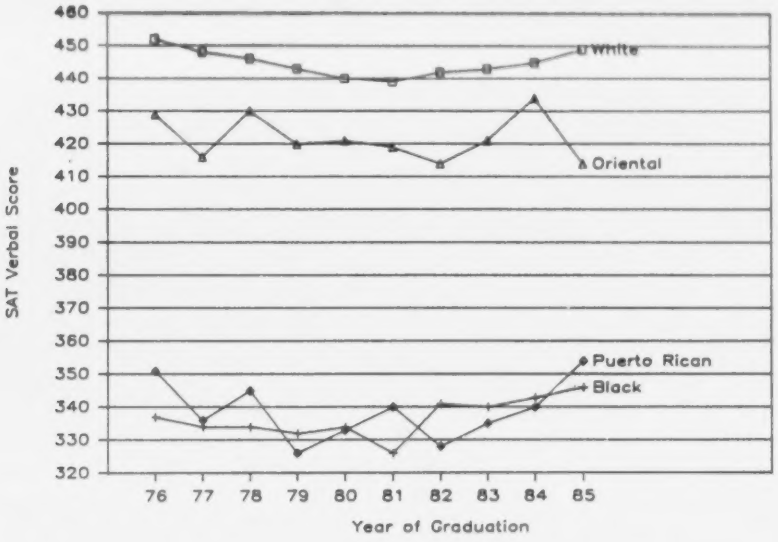

Figure 3

Scholastic Aptitude Test
Verbal Scores By Ethnic Group

The average verbal score for blacks in 1984-85 was 346. This is 20 points above the 1980-81 low and 9 points above the 1975-76 level. Their most current mathematical average of 369 is 19 points above the 1975-76 low. The differences between the black and white verbal and mathematical averages have narrowed since they were first recorded in 1975-76. The verbal average for black students in 1984-85 was 103 points below the white average, an improvement from the 115 point difference that existed in 1975-76. However, the difference has not narrowed since 1980-81. The

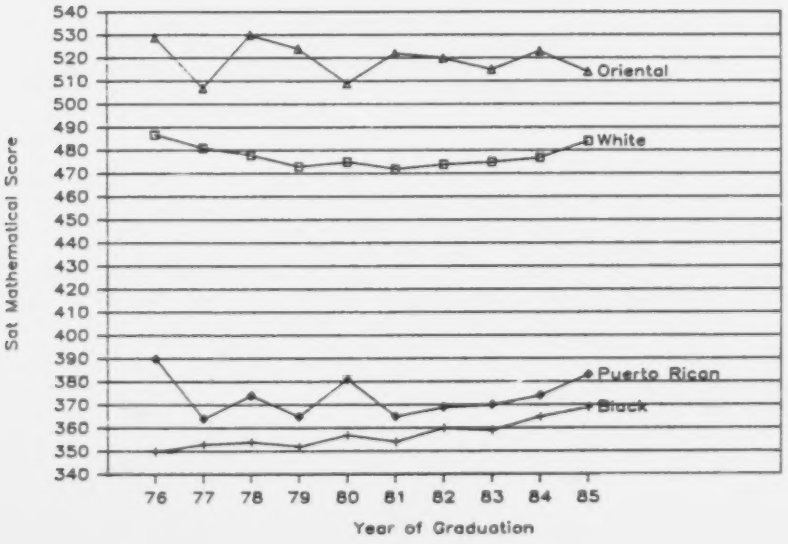

Figure 4

Scholastic Aptitude Test
Mathematical Scores By Ethnic Group

pattern in mathematics is similar. The current deficit of 115 points is better than the 137 point difference that existed in 1975-76, but is about the same as the difference that existed in 1980-81.

The average verbal score for Puerto Rican students is currently 354. This is 28 points above the 1978-79 low, but only 3 points above the 1975-76 level. Their mathematics average of 383 was the highest since 1975-76. The difference between the Puerto Rican and white student averages on the verbal SAT is the smallest ever recorded and that on the mathematical SAT is the third smallest. This improvement must be viewed cautiously as the number of Puerto Rican college-bound seniors declined 17.6 percent in the past year. The Puerto Rican verbal average is currently 95 points below the white average. This compares favorably to the 101 point deficit that existed in 1975-76 and the 117 point deficit of 1978-79. The difference in mathematics in 1984-85 was 101 points. The difference has been as low as 93 points (1975-76) and as high as 117 points (1976-77).

Orientals, which this year surpassed Puerto Ricans as the second largest college-bound group in the state, have a completely different pattern. Their 1984-85 average verbal score of 414 equalled the 1981-82 low and was 20 points below the 1983-84 high. The mathematics average of 514 is 9 points below last year's level. Their mathematics average has ranged from 507 to 530 since 1975-76. The verbal average of Oriental students has ranged from 11 points below (1983-84) to 35 points below (1984-85) the average of white students. On the mathematical SAT the Oriental average has ranged from 26 to 52 points above the white average and currently is 30 points above it.

Table 6 contains the average score on the Test of Standard Written English for male and female students in Connecticut and in the nation from its inception in 1974-75 to 1984-85. The Connecticut average has increased for three consecutive years after seven years of decline. The average of

Table 6

Test of Standard Written English

Academic Year	Males		Females		Total	
	CT	Nation	CT	Nation	CT	Nation
1984-85	42.6	42.0	44.1	43.1	43.4	42.7
1983-84	42.5	41.9	44.1	43.3	43.3	42.6
1982-83	42.1	41.6	43.7	43.0	43.0	42.3
1981-82	41.8	41.7	43.1	42.8	42.5	42.3
1980-81	41.9	41.5	43.3	42.9	42.6	42.2
1979-80	42.3	41.7	43.7	43.0	43.0	42.4
1978-79	42.3	41.8	44.2	43.2	43.3	42.5
1977-78	42.8	42.0	44.6	43.5	43.7	42.8
1976-77	42.9	42.2	44.5	43.7	43.8	42.9
1975-76	42.9	42.1	44.9	44.0	43.9	43.1
1974-75	43.0	42.2	45.4	44.3	44.2	43.2

43.4 (on a scale of 20 to 80) was 0.1 points above the prior year, and remained 0.7 points above the national average. The national average of 42.7 was also 0.1 points above the prior year. Females have outperformed males on this test, but the difference in the average score has narrowed. In Connecticut this difference was 1.5 points, and in the nation it was 1.4 points in 1984-85. In Connecticut the difference has been as high as 2.4 points (1974-75) and as low as 1.3 points (1981-82).

Table 7 contains a ten-year summary of the scores and percent of students in Connecticut and in the nation taking the six achievement tests selected most frequently by Connecticut students in 1984-85. In Connecticut, 10,155 students (35.2% of SAT takers) took at least one achievement test in 1984-85; last year 34.9% of Connecticut SAT takers took at least one achievement test. Nationwide the figure was 20.8%. English Composition, Mathematics Level 1, American History, Biology, Chemistry, and Mathematics Level 2 are the tests taken most frequently in Connecticut and the nation. In the nation, Mathematics Level 2 ranks third followed by Biology, American History and Chemistry. Major shifts in ranking occurred in Connecticut this year. Mathematics Level 2 moved up to sixth most frequently taken from eighth, Chemistry moved from sixth to fifth, and Spanish fell from fifth to eighth.

Of those students taking at least one achievement test, Connecticut seniors scored slightly better than those in the nation on the verbal SAT but worse than students in the nation on the mathematical SAT. For these Connecticut students, the average verbal SAT of 518 was two points above the national average and seven points above last year's state average. The Connecticut mathematical SAT average of 563 was nine points below the national average and seven points above last year's state average for this group. The verbal and mathematical SAT scores of Connecticut students taking at least one achievement test are, respectively, 78 and 88 points above the overall current state averages.

The English Composition Achievement test was taken by 33.2 percent of Connecticut SAT takers and 19.3 percent of SAT takers in the nation. These Connecticut students had an average verbal SAT score of 520, while those in the nation had an average of 519. Thus, the two groups are roughly comparable in verbal ability. The Connecticut average on the English Composition Achievement Test increased seven points in the past year to 525. This was two points above the national average and seven points above the state average over the past ten years.

The difference between the Connecticut and national average on the Mathematics I Achievement Test was consistent with the difference in the mathematical SAT of the students who took this achievement test. In 1984-85 the Connecticut mean score on the Mathematics Achievement Test of 536 was four points below the national average, while the mathematical SAT score of this Connecticut group was two points below the comparable national average. The Connecticut average was one point above last year's and eleven points above the 1979-80 low. In the state, 27.0 percent of the college-bound seniors took this achievement test. Nationwide, 15.2 percent of college-bound students took this achievement test.

Table 7

Selected Achievement Test Scores

Academic Year	Connecticut Percent Taking	Connecticut Mean Score	Nation Percent Taking	Nation Mean Score	Connecticut Percent Taking	Connecticut Mean Score	Nation Percent Taking	Nation Mean Score
	English Composition				Mathematics Level 1			
1984-85	33.2%	525	19.3%	523	27.0%	536	15.2%	540
1983-84	33.0%	518	19.0%	518	27.6%	535	15.2%	542
1982-83	32.4%	518	18.4%	518	27.0%	537	14.8%	543
1981-82	31.4%	521	18.3%	520	25.8%	539	14.7%	545
1980-81	32.2%	511	18.4%	512	25.8%	534	14.7%	539
1979-80	33.2%	517	18.6%	518	26.3%	525	14.7%	536
1978-79	33.2%	512	18.9%	514	26.4%	527	14.7%	537
1977-78	34.9%	514	19.7%	512	27.5%	532	14.8%	541
1976-77	33.8%	511	20.5%	516	25.5%	540	15.3%	547
1975-76	33.5%	536	21.3%	532	24.8%	542	15.8%	546
1974-75	33.1%	516	21.3%	515	25.1%	540	15.9%	545
	American History				Biology			
1984-85	7.5%	521	4.4%	525	6.8%	541	4.4%	554
1983-84	7.6%	514	4.5%	521	6.8%	532	4.5%	550
1982-83	7.5%	514	4.5%	516	7.4%	524	4.4%	544
1981-82	8.0%	521	5.6%	511	6.8%	529	4.1%	548
1980-81	7.9%	514	5.5%	508	7.3%	522	4.1%	546
1979-80	8.4%	509	5.6%	501	7.9%	525	4.1%	551
1978-79	9.2%	483	5.8%	480	7.8%	528	4.3%	547
1977-78	9.2%	508	6.1%	496	8.3%	528	4.8%	544
1976-77	9.3%	499	6.4%	492	7.3%	530	4.6%	543
1975-76	8.2%	501	6.4%	493	7.2%	540	4.6%	543
1974-75	7.9%	506	6.4%	494	6.6%	533	4.7%	544
	Chemistry				Mathematics Level 2			
1984-85	6.8%	567	3.7%	576	6.2%	651	4.7%	658
1983-84	6.3%	562	3.8%	573	5.2%	660	4.3%	659
1982-83	6.8%	555	3.7%	569	4.7%	654	4.1%	655
1981-82	6.3%	557	3.5%	575	4.5%	654	3.8%	661
1980-81	6.3%	556	3.5%	571	4.9%	651	3.8%	654
1979-80	6.0%	551	3.5%	573	4.9%	649	3.5%	653
1978-79	5.9%	551	3.4%	575	4.7%	655	3.5%	657
1977-78	6.0%	553	3.5%	577	4.3%	664	3.3%	665
1976-77	6.0%	540	3.6%	574	4.5%	658	3.1%	666
1975-76	5.2%	542	3.4%	567	4.5%	663	3.2%	665
1974-75	4.9%	549	3.3%	569	NA	NA	2.9%	660

The average score of Connecticut students on the American History Achievement Test was below the national average for the third year in a row. The Connecticut score of 521 in 1984-85 equalled the state's ten-year high, but was four points below the national average. In the past ten years, the percentage of college-bound seniors taking the test has declined, both in Connecticut and in the nation. In 1984-85, 7.5 percent of the state's college-bound seniors took this test, compared to a high of 9.3 percent in 1976-77. Nationwide, 4.4 percent of the college-bound seniors took this test. The combined SAT score (the sum of the verbal and mathematical tests) of the Connecticut students taking the American History Achievement Test was five points below the comparable national group.

The Connecticut average on the Biology Achievement Test of 541 was up nine points over last year's state average, the highest level in the past ten years. However, it was 13 points below the 1984-85 national average. That the Connecticut average on the Biology Achievement Test would be lower than the national average was not unexpected since this group of Connecticut students had a lower combined SAT score than students nationwide (1106 versus 1118) and a greater percentage of Connecticut students took this test compared to students nationwide (6.8% versus 4.4%).

The Connecticut average of 567 on the Chemistry Achievement Test was the highest in the past ten years, five points above last year's average, but was nine points below the national average. In the previous ten years the Connecticut average had ranged from 11 to 34 points below the national average. The Connecticut students who took this achievement test had a combined SAT of 1173, which was two points below the comparable national average. In Connecticut, 6.8 percent of the college-bound seniors took the Chemistry Achievement Test compared to 3.7 percent nationally.

The average Mathematics Level 2 Achievement Test score in Connecticut dropped nine points to 651 in the past year as the percentage of students taking the test rose from 5.2 to 6.2 percent. The Connecticut average is seven points below the national average even though both groups have the same mathematical SAT average -- 649. Since 1975-76 the Connecticut average on this achievement test has ranged from one point above to eight points below the national average.

HIGH SCHOOL RECORD

The SAT, TSWE and Achievement Test scores present only a partial picture of the Connecticut college-bound seniors. To expand this picture, these students' grade point averages, course work, honor course participation and high school activities are presented in the next four tables.

Table 8 presents ten years of data on the self-reported grade point average (GPA) and percentage of grades below C (2.0) for male and female college-bound seniors in Connecticut and the nation. These self-reported grade point averages for all college-bound students peaked in 1975-76. In 1984-85, the GPA for Connecticut males was 2.82 and that for females 2.94 (on a scale where A=4, B=3,..., F=0). In 1984-85, 6.5 percent of the college-bound males in Connecticut reported a GPA below 2.0 (a C average) as did 4.3 percent of the females. These percentages were at the highest levels in the past ten years. Comparable figures for the nation were 5.1 percent for males and 3.4 percent for females, indicating that the student group taking the test nationally had an average GPA higher than the student group taking the test in Connecticut.

Table 8

High School Grade Point Average (GPA)

	Connecticut				Nation			
	Males		Females		Males		Females	
Academic Year	GPA	Percent Below C	GPA	Percent Below C	GPA	Percent Below C	GPA	Percent Below C
1984-85	2.82	6.5%	2.94	4.3%	2.98	5.1%	3.07	3.4%
1983-84	2.82	6.4%	2.96	3.7%	2.98	5.0%	3.09	3.2%
1982-83	2.84	5.9%	2.98	3.4%	3.00	4.6%	3.11	3.0%
1981-82	2.84	6.4%	2.97	3.7%	3.00	4.6%	3.11	3.0%
1980-81	2.84	6.5%	2.98	3.5%	3.00	4.6%	3.11	3.0%
1979-80	2.84	6.3%	3.00	3.6%	3.00	4.6%	3.12	2.9%
1978-79	2.86	5.6%	3.02	2.8%	3.01	4.4%	3.13	2.7%
1977-78	2.89	5.4%	3.05	2.9%	3.03	4.2%	3.15	2.6%
1976-77	2.91	5.3%	3.05	2.6%	3.05	3.9%	3.17	2.3%
1975-76	2.91	5.0%	3.07	2.6%	3.05	3.7%	3.18	2.1%
1974-75	2.87	5.6%	3.05	2.7%	3.01	4.3%	3.16	2.3%

Table 9 compares the current mean number of years of study in English, mathematics, foreign languages, biological sciences, physical sciences and social studies for male and female college-bound students in Connecticut and the nation with the levels of one, five and ten years ago. In both Connecticut and the nation the mean years of study increased or remained

unchanged in each of the six subject areas. Connecticut college-bound seniors reported taking more courses, with the exception of social studies, than did students nationwide in each of the years examined. The notable changes in the pattern of courses taken were the increase in the number of mathematics courses taken by students (females especially) in the past ten years, the decline and then slight rebound in the number of foreign language courses taken over the past ten years in Connecticut, and the increase in the number of physical science courses taken in the past ten years. Females are now taking the equivalent of 3/4 of a semester more of mathematics and 2/3 of a semester more of physical sciences and males about 2/3 of a semester more of physical sciences than they did ten years ago.

Table 9

Mean Years of Study
by Subject Area

Course		1974-75		1979-80		1983-84		1984-85	
		CT	Nation	CT	Nation	CT	Nation	CT	Nation
English	Males	4.00	3.94	4.01	3.93	4.01	3.97	4.01	3.98
	Females	4.04	3.96	4.06	3.99	4.06	4.02	4.06	4.02
Mathematics	Males	3.67	3.55	3.75	3.65	3.86	3.78	3.88	3.80
	Females	3.30	3.15	3.46	3.32	3.64	3.54	3.68	3.58
Foreign Languages	Males	2.62	2.17	2.46	2.02	2.50	2.08	2.51	2.13
	Females	2.96	2.49	2.85	2.31	2.90	2.38	2.93	2.44
Biological Sciences	Males	1.49	1.44	1.41	1.39	1.39	1.38	1.39	1.40
	Females	1.55	1.45	1.49	1.41	1.46	1.42	1.47	1.44
Physical Sciences	Males	1.78	1.79	2.03	1.99	2.08	2.05	2.10	2.08
	Females	1.43	1.44	1.64	1.57	1.72	1.69	1.76	1.74
Social Studies	Males	3.02	3.21	3.06	3.23	3.11	3.26	3.14	3.28
	Females	2.85	3.14	2.91	3.17	2.97	3.22	3.01	3.24

Table 10 compares the current percentage of male and female college-bound seniors in honors courses in Connecticut and in the nation with the percent one, five and ten years ago. The percentage of Connecticut college-bound seniors in honors courses in 1984-85 was more than five and ten years ago but in some cases (English, and males in social studies and the sciences) less than last year. The percentage of Connecticut students in honors courses was greater than the national percentage in foreign languages, the sciences and social studies, but below the national percentage in English and mathematics. More females were enrolled in

English and foreign language honors courses while more males were enrolled in mathematics and physical science honors courses. In the past year the greatest change was the one percentage point increase in the percentage of females in mathematics honors courses.

Table 10

Percent of College-Bound Seniors
in Honors Courses

		1974-75		1979-80		1983-84		1984-85	
		CT	Nation	CT	Nation	CT	Nation	CT	Nation
English	Male	11.0	12.0	11.3	12.7	14.9	17.4	14.8	18.4
	Female	15.0	15.0	14.5	15.6	19.4	21.6	19.3	23.2
Mathematics	Male	17.0	16.0	14.9	15.2	17.6	18.7	18.4	19.4
	Female	14.0	13.0	12.5	12.6	14.9	16.3	15.9	17.3
Foreign Languages	Male	8.0	7.0	8.8	6.6	11.4	8.5	11.8	8.8
	Female	11.0	8.0	12.3	7.3	15.2	9.6	15.6	10.2
Biological Sciences	Male	12.0	10.0	10.5	9.2	13.4	12.2	13.2	12.8
	Female	12.0	9.0	10.2	8.7	13.8	12.1	14.2	13.1
Physical Sciences	Male	12.0	10.0	12.3	10.3	15.6	13.8	14.9	14.4
	Female	10.0	8.0	10.1	8.3	13.3	11.7	13.4	12.7
Social Studies	Male	10.0	8.0	10.0	8.7	13.7	12.4	13.0	13.4
	Female	10.0	8.0	10.7	8.5	14.5	12.6	14.6	13.8

Table 11 compares the current percentage of Connecticut male and female college-bound seniors involved in high school activities with the percentages one, five and ten years ago. The percentage participation refers to those students who participate in at least one activity, not the participation of college-bound students in general. In the past ten years the percentage of SAT takers responding to this question has ranged from 67.3 percent to 78.1 percent for males and from 73.2 percent to 86.1 percent for females. Over the past ten years the male pattern of participation in extracurricular activities has remained essentially unchanged with about 83 percent participating in athletics; 5 percent in ethnic organizations; 22 percent in journalism, debating or dramatics; 31 percent in art, music or dance; 8 percent in departmental or preprofessional clubs; 29 percent in religious organizations; 37 percent in social or community clubs; and 18 percent in student government. The pattern of female activity has changed significantly, however. Female participation in athletics has increased from 57 percent to 64.8 percent over the past ten years while participation

has decreased in the areas of journalism, debating and dramatics (from 35% to 29.9%); departmental or preprofessional clubs (from 18% to 11.2%); and religious organizations (from 41% to 33.7%). Females have had higher participation rates than males in all activities except athletics for the past ten years.

Table 11

High School Activities

Activity	Sex	1974-75	1979-80	1983-84	1984-85
Athletics, including Intramural & Community	Male	82.0	82.4	82.8	83.0
	Female	57.0	62.4	64.8	64.8
Ethnic Organizations	Male	5.0	5.0	5.2	5.1
	Female	8.0	7.1	7.0	7.5
Jouralism, Debating, Dramatics	Male	22.0	21.8	21.8	21.4
	Female	35.0	31.6	30.2	29.9
Art, Music or Dance*	Male	23.0	30.2	30.5	30.8
	Female	39.0	51.7	50.3	50.9
Departmental or Preprofessional Clubs	Male	8.0	7.5	8.1	8.6
	Female	18.0	12.0	10.5	11.2
Religious Organizations	Male	29.0	27.7	28.1	29.1
	Female	41.0	35.2	34.4	33.7
Social or Community Clubs	Male	38.0	34.7	37.1	37.6
	Female	55.0	48.6	50.4	51.0
Student Government	Male	20.0	17.7	18.0	17.1
	Female	28.0	26.9	26.7	26.4
Percent Reporting	Male	67.3	78.1	77.7	76.1
	Female	73.2	86.1	84.8	83.2

*In 1974-75 this included band, orchestra and chorus only.

COLLEGE PLANS

The Student Descriptive Questionnaire section on college plans includes questions about degree-level goals, intended areas of study, plans for special assistance, advanced placement plans, housing preferences and planned extracurricular activities. The first two areas are analyzed in this report.

Table 12 presents the current degree-level goals of male and female Connecticut college-bound seniors and those of one, five and ten years ago. In 1984-85, 6.5 percent of these students planned to obtain either a two year or associate's degree, 35.0 percent a bachelor's degree, 25.8 percent a master's degree, 13.5 percent a professional degree, and 19.2 percent were undecided. Compared to last year more students were planning to obtain a bachelor's degree and fewer had goals of obtaining advanced or two-year degrees. In the past ten years the major shifts have been a 7.8 percentage point drop in the percentage undecided, a 7.0 percentage point increase in the percent citing a bachelor's degree, a 3.8 percentage point increase in the percentage citing a master's degree as a goal, and a 1.5 percentage point

Table 12

Degree-Level Goals

Goal	Sex	Percentage of Students 1974-75	1979-80	1983-84	1984-85
Two Year Training Program	Male	5.0	4.4	4.5	3.9
	Female	7.0	3.9	3.1	2.9
	Total	6.0	4.2	3.8	3.4
Associate in Arts Degree	Male	2.0	2.0	2.0	1.9
	Female	4.0	5.1	4.3	4.1
	Total	3.0	3.7	3.2	3.1
Bachelor's Degree	Male	26.0	32.4	33.7	34.3
	Female	30.0	32.8	34.7	35.5
	Total	28.0	32.6	34.2	35.0
Master's Degree	Male	22.0	25.2	27.2	26.9
	Female	21.0	23.1	24.8	25.0
	Total	22.0	24.0	25.9	25.8
MD, Ph.D., Other Professional Degree	Male	19.0	13.7	14.2	13.8
	Female	11.0	12.0	13.4	13.3
	Total	15.0	12.8	13.8	13.5
Undecided	Male	27.0	22.3	18.4	19.2
	Female	27.0	23.1	19.7	19.2
	Total	27.0	22.7	19.1	19.2

decline in the percentage citing two-year program or associate's degree. While the percentage with a professional degree as a goal has declined only modestly, the composition of that group has changed markedly. Ten years ago, 19 percent of the males and 11 percent of the females cited this area as their goal. Currently the percentages are 13.8 percent and 13.3 percent, respectively. With these changes, the distributions of the responses of male and female students are more alike now than five or ten years ago.

Table 13 presents the percentage of male and female college-bound seniors in Connecticut planning to enter six global areas of study for 1984-85 and for one, five and ten years ago. The arts and humanities area includes architecture, art, the languages, music, philosophy, religion, and theater. The biological sciences category includes agriculture, biology, forestry, nursing, therapy, premedical, and similar areas of concentration. The physical sciences area includes computer science, engineering, mathematics, chemistry, geology, and physics. The social science area includes education, ethnic studies, geography, history, home economics, library science, military science, psychology and similar courses.

Table 13

Intended Area of Study

	1974-75		1979-80		1983-84		1984-85	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Arts & Humanities	10.8	15.4	10.3	14.5	9.3	12.3	9.2	13.0
Biological Sciences	21.1	33.3	13.9	24.6	11.2	22.6	10.3	20.8
Business, Commerce & Communications	17.6	12.2	25.1	22.5	25.1	26.0	27.1	27.2
Physical Sciences	20.6	4.0	27.5	7.1	34.0	10.7	31.6	8.7
Computer Science	2.2	0.8	5.5	3.5	11.1	6.0	8.6	4.2
Engineering	11.3	0.6	17.6	1.8	19.1	2.5	19.7	2.4
Mathematics	2.7	1.7	1.3	1.0	1.3	1.4	1.2	1.3
Social Science	18.8	28.2	15.1	24.4	13.5	21.9	13.8	22.4
Education	4.7	13.3	2.5	9.0	1.7	6.8	1.6	6.4
Misc. and Undecided	11.7	7.4	8.1	6.9	6.9	6.5	8.0	7.9

In the past year the greatest shift was the decline in computer science as an intended area of study. The percentage of males intending to study in this area fell from 11.1 percent to 8.6 percent and the percentage of females fell from 6 percent to 4.2 percent. Over the five- and ten-year period the intent to study this area is up, however. Also, evident in the last year was an increase in the percent undecided. In the past ten years there has been a distinct shift in the intended area of study from the arts and humanities, the biological sciences and the social sciences to business and commerce and the physical sciences. The percentage of females intending to enter business and commerce increased from 12.2 percent in 1974-75 to 27.2 percent in 1984-85, while the percentage of males increased from 17.6 percent to 27.1 percent in the same period. The percentage of males intending to enter the physical sciences increased from 20.6 percent in 1974-75 to 31.6 percent in 1984-85. In this traditionally male area the percentage of females increased from 4.0 percent to 8.7 percent in this period. Within the physical science area, computer science and engineering experienced significant growth over the ten-year period, but mathematics had a slight decline.

Of particular interest to educators is the number of seniors intending to enter education. This is a useful predictor of the supply of new teachers available four years later. In the past ten years, the percentage of students planning to study education has decreased sharply. Ten years ago, 4.7 percent of the males and 13.3 percent of the females intended to enter this area. Today the percentages are 1.6 percent for males and 6.4 percent for females. Over the past ten years, the percentage of males has dropped steadily. The percentage of females declined for eight years, reaching a low of 6.3 percent in 1982-83.

Table 14 presents data on the average SAT scores for Connecticut high school seniors intending to study education and Figure 5 compares these to

Table 14

Average SAT Scores of Connecticut Students
Intending to Study Education

Year	Percent of Students	Estimated Number of Students	SAT Verbal	SAT Math
1984-85	4.2	1,180	407	421
1983-84	4.4	1,300	401	416
1982-83	4.2	1,290	395	409
1981-82	4.5	1,390	395	408
1980-81	5.7	1,780	396	418
1979-80	6.1	1,870	391	419
1978-79	6.5	2,070	402	422
1977-78	7.1	2,190	403	422

other intended areas of study. These data have been reported by the College Board since 1977-78. The categories within education cited by the most students were child development, physical education, elementary education, and education of the mentally retarded.

The verbal and mathematical SAT averages of those intending to study education have increased a combined total of 25 points in the past three years. The SAT verbal average of those intending to study education declined from 403 to 395 between 1977-78 and 1981-82, and since then has increased by 12 points to 407. The SAT mathematical average of these seniors declined from 422 in 1977-78 to 408 in 1981-82 and since then has increased by 13 points to 421.

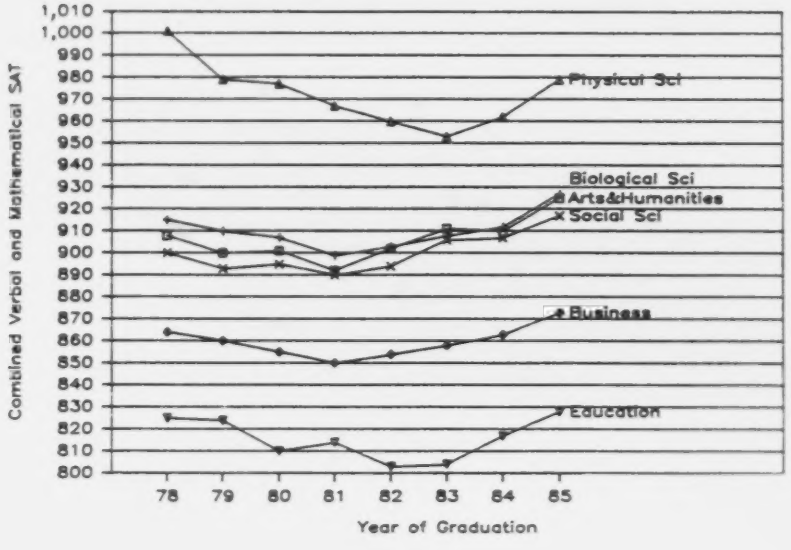

Figure 5

Combined SAT scores of Connecticut Students
by Intended Area of Study

Recall from Table 13 that students' intended areas of study have changed over the past five years. The combined verbal and mathematical SAT score for each intended area of study has changed also. The combined SAT average in Connecticut declined from 907 in 1977-78 to a low of 893 in 1980-81. Since then it has increased by 22 points to 915. The combined SAT score of those intending to study education fell 21 points between 1977-78 and 1981-82 followed by a 25 point increase to its current level of 828. The

combined SAT scores of all areas except the physical sciences are currently above their 1977-78 levels. The physical science area, which has attracted many more students in recent years, currently has a combined SAT average 22 points below its 1977-78 level. While the SAT scores of those who eventually become teachers are greater than those reported here, it is clear that the teaching profession is not currently attractive to the best and brightest high school students. Connecticut intends to attract superior students into teaching with the scholarship loan program established by Public Act 84-513. This program will offer to students with high SAT scores and with an interest in teaching, up to $20,000 in scholarship loans over four years. These loans will be forgiven after these students have taught for five years in Connecticut schools. In its 1985 inaugural, this program awarded scholarship loans of $3,000 to 46 students enrolling in public colleges and $5,000 to 64 students enrolling in private colleges. About 46 percent are attending schools out of state.

Connecticut State Department of Education

Program and Support Services
Lorraine M. Aronson
Deputy Commissioner

Office of Research and Planning
Pascal D. Forgione, Jr., Chief

Peter M. Prowda, Coordinator
Research Services

Staff
Beth Acebo

Velma A. Adams, Editor